

REMARKS

The Office Action dated August 21, 2003 has been reviewed. Applicants have canceled claim 1 without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 2-3 and 6-10 are currently amended. Claims 4-5 are allowed. Claims 2-10 are pending, of which claims 2-3 and 6-10 are respectfully submitted for reconsideration by the Examiner.

Claims 1 and 8-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,481,187 to Marcott et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,823,825 to Büchl. Applicants have canceled claim 1 without prejudice or disclaimer, rendering the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), of claim 1, moot. Applicants have amended claims 8-10 to depend from allowed claim 4. In as much as claims 8-10 depend from allowed claim 4, it is requested that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), of claims 8-10, be withdrawn, and the claims allowed.

Claims 2-3 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including the features of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants have rewritten claims 2-3 in independent form including the features of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, it is submitted that claims 2-3 are allowable as well.

Claims 6-7 are objected to for reasons of form, but are otherwise allowable, as claims 6-7 ultimately depend from allowed claim 4. Applicants have amended claims 6-7 to particularly point out and distinctly claim Applicants' invention, and to address the Examiner's concerns. Withdrawal of the objection to claims 6-7 is requested. It is respectfully submitted that all pending claims, *i.e.* claims 2-10 are in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

Applicants respectfully request that this Amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 be entered by the Examiner, placing all pending claims in condition for allowance. Applicant submits that the claim amendments do not raise new issues or necessitate additional search of the art by the Examiner.

Should the Examiner feel that there are any issues outstanding after consideration of this response, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative to expedite the prosecution.

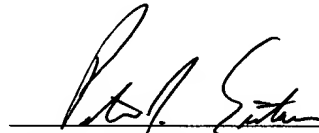
If there are any other fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-0310. If a fee is required for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 not accounted for above, such an extension is requested and the fee should also be charged to our Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: December 18, 2003

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